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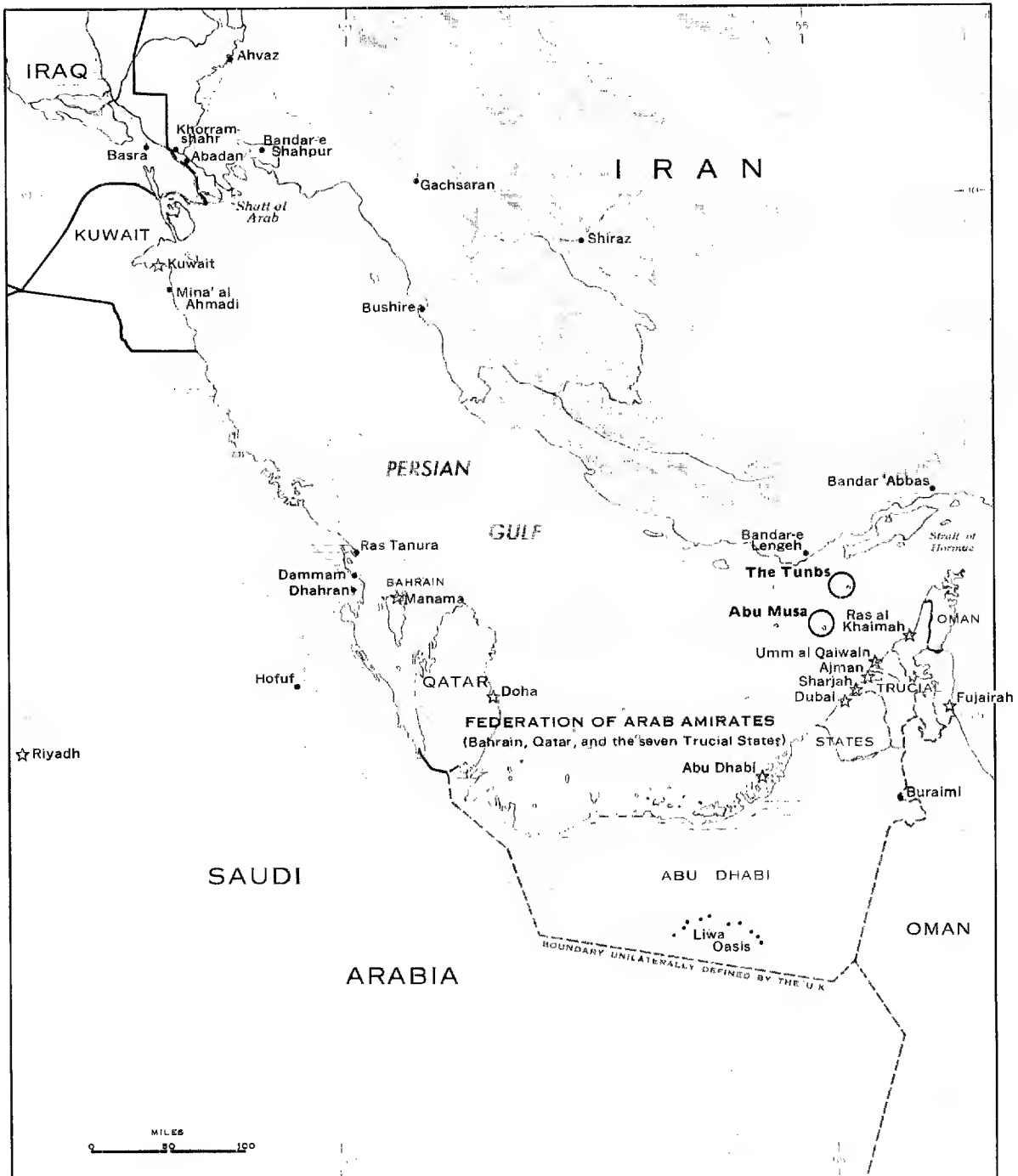
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IRAN - PERSIAN GULF: Foreign Minister Zahedi has strongly reiterated his government's determination to assert its claim to the disputed Gulf islands of Tunbs and Abu Musa, currently controlled by Gulf sheikhdoms. Blaming the UK for the present controversy, Zahedi claimed the disputed islands are essential to Iran's security, and implied that, although his government would prefer to settle the dispute through negotiations, it would take whatever measures are necessary to meet Iran's security requirements in the Gulf. He further charged that the Kuwaitis are encouraging the other Gulf Arab leaders to resist reaching an agreement with Iran on the sovereignty issue and warned that if Kuwait persists, it could no longer expect cooperation and friendship from Iran.

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